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## Faith and Reality

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## Faith and Reality

Thinkers can question whether or not reality is only a mental projection. We know well that the decisions we make in life have real consequences for ourselves and for others. At the same time, and probably quite connected with this view of reality, we are in possession of an essential complementary truth that arises from our spirituality. That is, for those of us who exercise the gift of faith/ trust in God, our understanding of, and relationship with reality, is appropriately influenced by that faith, and vice-versa. We do not have to reason or talk about such things in order to live a meaningful life. But reflecting a bit on faith and reality might help us to more deeply appreciate our perspectives on life, and to think, speak and act with fuller awareness of who we are.

Some scientists would say that reality consists only in what we can measure, which leaves both God and love outside that understanding of all that we experience. What a difference it makes for us to accept that God is real, and that all of reality exists in God, who is love, and that our love is real. That understanding of reality is also an expression of our spirituality. Both are gifts from God, in whom we exist, and in whom we have a destiny and a meaningful purpose which vastly transcends the limitations of our intelligence.

As humans, we do not need to have a clear definition of love to know when we are loved. But if we do not believe that we are loved, we might as well not be, as far as our experience is concerned. No one can prove that any one of us is loved, indicating how very deeply our spirituality affects this most important reality of life. Trusting God or trusting other people is not a physical measurable quality of our lives, but it is a gift of God enabling us to participate in the reality of love. Rather than always taking for granted that we are loved and that we love others, we might reflect on the splendid gift of spirituality that is ours, through which we are able to believe in love where it really exists in us and around us.

We cannot force anyone to love us, as we might have learned if we had wanted this or that person to have a special regard for us, when he or she did not. But we will never be lacking what we need of love if we bring our faith to bear on this most important reality of our lives. Rather than demanding or asking that someone else relate with us according to our desires, we can tell God that we are not feeling the support we think we need at this time. At the moment of telling, as long as we are not merely talking to ourselves, we are already in the presence of God who knows us and loves us as we are. Sometimes, merely calling to mind this belief in the presence of God's love can be healing.

At other times, thinking about God as loving us does not satisfy our discontent. We might then try "backwards logic" as a quite human and perhaps amusing movement of mind and heart: consider the possibility that God created us and then completely and uncaringly forgot about us. That is such a negative thought that it can provide an opening for a shared joke with God, and lead us to acknowledge that we are loved, even if at this particular time we experience feelings of loneliness or lack of appreciation by others.

Feelings come and go. But our faith makes the reality of love ever more complete and fulfilling.